

A serene sunset over a beach. The sky is filled with vibrant, colorful clouds in shades of orange, red, and purple. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The ocean waves are gentle, and the beach is wet, reflecting the colors of the sky. In the distance, a small bird is walking on the sand.

5 STEPS TO

# STRESS LESS

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*Created by Robin Angela*

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Note: The information provided in this guidebook is for educational purposes and should not be used for the diagnosis, treatment, cure, or prevention of disease; nor should it be used to replace the services of a physician.

This information has been compiled from traditional and modern wellness books and articles, as well as personal research, education, and experience.

# WELCOME

Hi! I'm Robin Angela, and I'm so glad you're here!

It's been a journey building the content for this guidebook, and it is my honor to share it with you.



There are a lot of gems throughout this guidebook, but I'll cut to the chase and give you one of them right now. The opposite of stress is not rest, its **focus**.

This guidebook offers you many ways to focus your mind, energy, and intentions throughout the day. All of which will have a direct impact on how you experience stress.

Simply reading this guidebook is an opportunity to practice focusing. I encourage you lean into this invitation and minimize background noise and disruptions as much as possible (yes, that includes your phone). Challenge yourself to focus on this one thing to be as present as possible.

I have experienced the profound effects of every tip and technique I share in this guidebook, and knowing what awaits you greatly excites me. I hope you're excited too. Believe me when I say, the best is yet to come...

Enjoy!

*Robin Angela*

# THE SCIENCE OF STRESS

Stress is a natural function of our bodies. We are animals, after all, and like other animals we have a nervous system which has allowed us to survive and evolve over millions of years by evading predators and other threats to our being.

One of the parts of our nervous system is called the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) which is responsible for the fight, flight, or freeze response. It was essentially designed to keep us alive when faced with mortal threats. When threats are perceived, the SNS kicks in, the heart rate rises, higher thoughts disappear, and the ability to feel the body decreases.

The problem is, in today's modern world we are less often faced with the threat of a lion, and continually faced with technology stimuli, work demands, financial strain, and crowded places that keep the SNS perpetually triggered. This often results in anxiety, chronic stress, insomnia, and other long-term mental and physical health problems.



## SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

We have to make mindful and deliberate attempts to protect our energy from external stressors. The purpose of this guidebook is to support you on that journey.

So, let's get started...

# 1. MAKE YOUR MORNING YOURS

As you start a new day, the first hour you are awake is sacred time. How we think, feel, and the things we do in this hour lay the foundation for the rest of our day.



## THE FIRST 5 MINUTES

Those first few minutes when you realize you're awake but have not moved or muscle or even opened your eyes, is a beautiful opportunity to offer a prayer of gratitude.

I will often start with simply saying "I am so grateful I woke up this morning, thank you. Thank you for my health, and for keeping me safe and warm all night."

Then spend a few moments giving gratitude for the things you want more of in your life. I'll usually say thank you for 3-5 things, some of which I already have and want more of – and some I have faith are on their way to me.

## ACTION STEP

What are 5 things you're grateful for?  
They can be things you already have that you want more of, or things you're giving gratitude for as if it's done.

## PROTECT YOUR ENERGY

To create a peaceful and positive foundation for your day, avoid letting the outside world influence how you think and feel first thing in the morning. As tough as it may be, try to spend the first hour of the day without looking at your phone or turning on the TV.

Instead, listen to music or a meditation, or simply enjoy the quiet. Spend a few minutes journaling, setting your intentions for the day, reading, or anything that fuels you and helps you feel peaceful, positive, and confident in who you are.

We spend most of our days receiving information – let this be a sacred hour where YOUR thoughts and feelings are the priority and the only message you receive.



### ACTION STEP

If you use an iPhone, set up DownTime in your phone's settings. This allows you to have a period of time where you are not receiving push notification. It's a great way to preserve your 'off the grid' hours.

## 2. CONNECT WITH YOUR VALUES



When our values are out of alignment it has a profound affect on us, particularly on our stress level. The problem is, most of us don't even know when this is happening.

Do you know what your values are? When I first set out to discover my values, I found endless online tests and surveys to help me narrow down what mattered most to me. As I looked over the list of possibilities my intuition showed me exactly how to get to the heart of the matter...

Spend some time answering these questions:

- **What are you most proud of?**
  - *Over the past year when have you found yourself feeling proud? What were you proud of?*
- **What do you feel guilty about?**
  - *Over the past year, when have you found yourself feeling guilty or ashamed? What did you feel guilty about?*

Now, can you draw any lines of connection between your answers to the two questions?

For example, if one of your sources of pride is your marriage or your spouse – and one of your sources of guilt is not spending much quality time with your spouse or neglecting your relationship – that's a line of connection.

What I've discovered is that the things that bring us the most pride tend to be the things we value the most. When we're out of alignment with those values, we experience a deep level of stress by way of guilt and shame.

Stress in our daily lives is expected – the looming deadline or the unexpected traffic. The difference between these bouts of pressure and our values being out of alignment, is the difference between being annoyed and feeling like a piece of shit. You know what I'm talking about.

So, what to do? Fix it! When you discover lines of connection between your sources of pride and guilt – that is where attention must be paid.

## MAKE A COMMITMENT

Start by making a commitment – how are you vowing to remedy the disconnect?

Next, schedule it. Using the example from earlier, put one date night each month on the calendar and share it with your spouse. Or put a reminder on your calendar once a day to text them “I Love You.” Decide what remedy feels best, and then make sure it happens.

## ENJOY THE RESULTS

After seeing these commitments through, you'll find yourself feeling more whole and balanced. Those little stressors in life will still show up – but your foundation will be stronger and you'll be able to manage the daily ones with greater ease. When our behavior is in alignment with our values, the little stressors in life don't threaten our overall happiness and sense of identity. When they're out of alignment, those little stressors can be the tipping point that sets us off on a spiral of negativity. It's worth the time to follow through on the commitment, don't you think?

### 3. CALL IT BY ITS NAME

One of my first epiphanies with stress was that the word itself means nothing. It's an umbrella term that justifies us all feeling manic and overwhelmed.

One of the key ways to reduce stress is to figure out what emotion is actually occurring under this umbrella word. What are you actually feeling?



In this step I encourage you to check in with your heart. If the word “stress” is off limits – what other words could you use to describe how your feeling?

Here are a few examples:

- Sadness
- Guilt
- Pressured
- Fear

Start noticing when you find yourself using the phrase “I’m stressed out,” even when it’s to yourself. Simply begin by noticing it, then ask yourself what other words you could use to describe what you’re actually feeling. Think of the term “stress” as a mask. If you took that mask off, what’s really going on beneath it?

This step helps us to more honestly connect with our emotions. When we do that, we can address the situation with more clarity.

We tend to find comfort in simply being “stressed” - hell, everyone is stressed - but with that mindset we’re bound to stay there forever. Bringing the real emotion to light gives us something to work with and a better chance at solving the problem, so that we don’t need to wear the stress mask nearly as often.

## 4. GIVE GRATITUDE



As we discussed in the last step, we need to identify what emotion we’re actually experiencing underneath our “stress” mask. Most often, it’s fear; and the antidote for fear is gratitude.

When it comes to things we’re facing that cause us fear or emotional unrest, start giving gratitude for the desired outcome. For example, “Thank you for getting me home safely tonight,” or “I’m so grateful that my kids are safe at school.”

It may feel a little fake at first, but keep it coming. Again, gratitude is the antidote for fear. The more you express gratitude for the desired outcomes in situations that you’re feeling fear in, you will notice a shift in your emotions. Fear can’t survive in the light of immense gratitude. So bring it on!

In moments when you're feeling a little funky, out of sorts, or low-vibe gratitude is the greatest solution. I encourage you to employ a remedy I call, 'make it rain gratitude.'

I start with the big, obvious things – “I'm grateful for my life, I'm grateful for my family's health and safety, I'm grateful for my home.” And then I start to move into the things that may seem 'small' but they're the things we often over look as being blessings, and in turn, we often take them for granted. For example...

“Thank you for my two working hands that allow me to type. Thank you for my view of the sunset. Thank you for clean water running through my home. Thank you for an abundance of food. Thank you for the electricity that powers my home. Thank you for the sound of my kitten's purr that makes me feel so loved.”

When we do this we start to realize how massively abundant we are and how much we have to be grateful for. Again, no low vibes can survive in the bright light of gratitude, and after a few minutes of scanning your life for all of the things you're grateful for –you'll find your energy and your mood elevating.

Suddenly hitting every red light doesn't affect you so much – because you're in a car, listening to music that you love, wearing clothes you didn't have to make, driving somewhere you love to be with people who want you there. Not so bad after all, is it?



Perspective is key. When we make gratitude a habit, we start to see the circumstances of our lives as opportunities and invitations. Hitting every red light for example, though slightly annoying may be saving you from being a part of a crash a few miles ahead, or may give you a few extra minutes in the car to hear the commercial for a service you're in need of.

Leading with a gracious heart will show you the Universe is here to support you, not out to get you. And this may be the best way to relieve stress. When we realize that everything we experience can be an opportunity and a blessing – nothing can keep us down.

## 5. MAKE YOUR BED TIME YOURS

Just as we start the day with a sacred hour of 'me time,' I encourage you to end the day the same way. Here's my favorite wind-down process:

### PREPARE FOR THE NEXT DAY

- After wrapping up things for the day (whether that's sending a final email, or tidying up the house), I prepare for the next day. I'll go over all the things I need to get done, and create a timeline for when/how I'll get it all done.

I find that one of the things that tends to keep us up at night is our list of to-dos and wondering how we'll get it all done. If we can figure all of that out before bed – we sleep much better.

### PROCESS THE DAY

- Take 10 minutes to journal on these three prompts:
  - 3 things I'm grateful for today
  - 3 successes I had today
  - How I'll improve tomorrow

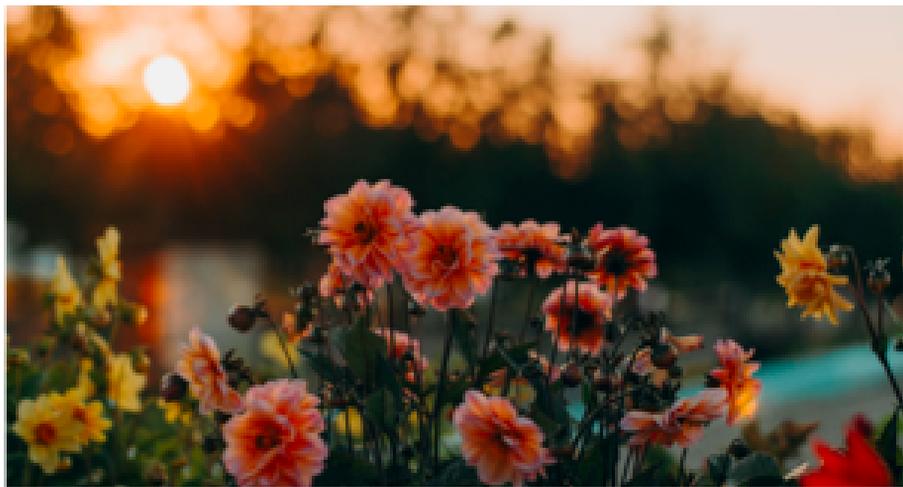


## MINIMIZE SCREEN TIME

If you love to watch re-runs of *The Office* before bed, you're in good company. The goal here is to minimize the influence of the outside world on your subconscious mind before you go to sleep.

Think of those final minutes of being awake as an investment in your mood tomorrow – how do you want to start the day? Comparing yourself to others, or inspired, empowered, and happy?

Make your bed time a time to nourish your mind and feed it what you want it to process as you sleep, and fuel your mind as you awake.



## THE POWER OF THE WIND-DOWN

A psychology professor once held up a glass of water to her students. She asked how much they thought the glass weighed. They all gave their best guess “8oz, 10oz...” She asked what they thought would happen if she held the glass for a few minutes. Confused, they all replied, “nothing.”

She continued, and asked what they thought would happen if she held it up for a few hours? Or a day? “you'd have severe muscle damage... you'd need medical attention for sure.” She reminded them that the weight of the glass hadn't changed, and was in fact trivial, it was the amount of time she held it without release that caused severe damage.

The glass represents 'stress' or the problems in our lives that we carry with us throughout the day. The severity of those problems is more or less irrelevant, especially when we think they aren't severe at all.

The point is not that we can't bare the weight of our stressors, the point is that if we bare the weight continually for long periods of time it will have a detrimental affect on our health.

Your bed time is your opportunity to put the glass down. Put down your phone, put down your worries. Lay down your weapons and your excuses. Leave your judgments about others and yourself at the bedroom door. Allow these final moments of the day to be where you feel safe, nourished, and relaxed. Put down the glass, think happy thoughts, be grateful, and sleep well.



*I hope that implementing any one of these steps (and especially all of them) enriches your life greatly. May you feel more secure, live more intentionally, and experience more joy than ever before.*

*If you'd like to share any of your experiences after implementing these techniques, I'd love to hear them! You can send your stories to [hello@robinangela.com](mailto:hello@robinangela.com).*

*If you'd like more personalized support on your journey, visit [robinangela.com/coaching](https://robinangela.com/coaching) for my 1:1 coaching opportunities.*

*Sending you much love and light,*

*Robin Angela*